

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-23 are currently pending. Claims 1, 14, and 19 have been amended by the present amendment. The changes to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 14 was objected to as containing an informality; Claims 1, 8-12, 14, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0097424 to Ferlitsch (hereinafter “the ‘424 application”); Claims 2, 3, 5-7, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘424 application in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,130,921 to Goodman et al. (hereinafter “the ‘921 patent”); Claims 4, 17, and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘424 application and the ‘921 patent, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,915,096 to Rosenzweig et al. (hereinafter “the ‘096 patent”); and Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the ‘424 application in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,542,892 to Cantwell (hereinafter “the ‘892 patent”).

Amended Claim 1 is directed to a server apparatus, comprising:

a first sharing unit that shares a print environment thereof with other apparatuses on a network, wherein the first sharing unit includes

a connection management unit that manages, in response to a print reservation input by a user, the print reservation including a print location, the connecting of the first sharing unit to a second sharing unit of a second server apparatus on the network, the second server being selected based on route information acquired based on the print location input by the user, the route information including a list of servers defining a route from the server apparatus to a third server at the print location, the route including the second server apparatus; and a

transfer unit that transfers information of the print reservation, the acquired route information, and a document related to the print reservation to the second sharing unit of the second server apparatus for routing to the third server and then to a print server connected to a printer at the print location identified in the information of the print reservation.

The changes to Claim 1 are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.¹

The '424 application is directed to a method of printing from a computing device including sending a print task to a local print system component; acquiring printing data related to the print task with the local print system component; sending the print task to a remote print system component and sending the print task to at least one device in communication with the remote print system component for printing. In particular, as shown in Figure 7, the '424 application discloses that a print processor 194 at a local location can send a message to a spooler 192 or a print processor 196 at a remote location. Further, the '424 application discloses that the message 195, 197 that is sent to either the spooler or the print processor can include print task data that identifies destination devices and the characteristics of the print task. Further, as discussed in paragraph [0076], the '424 patent discloses that the remote spooler 192 or the remote print processor 194 can then query for printers that have the capability to handle a specific print task. Further, the '424 application discloses that, once the appropriate remote printers are identified, e.g., printers 210-214, the print processor '196 or the spooler '192 at the remote location may respond to the print processor 194 at the local location with the identity of the printers 210-214 and their capabilities. Further, the '424 application discloses that the print process is completed by sending the appropriate components to the appropriate printers, which may include copy splitting or job splitting to complete the print task.

¹ See, e.g., Figures 1 and 30 and pages 20-23 in the specification.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that the ‘424 application fails to disclose a connection management unit that manages, in response to a print reservation input by a user, the print reservation including a print location, the connecting of a first sharing unit (of a first server) to a second sharing unit of a second server, the second server being selected based on route information acquired based on the print location input by the user, the route information including a list of servers defining a route from the server apparatus to a third server at the print location, the route including the second server apparatus, as recited in amended Claim 1. In this regard, Applicants note that the Office Action on page 3 refers to paragraphs ‘424 [0075] and [0076] and states that the second server is selected based on the acquired route information in that the spooler 192 is “selected.” However, Applicants note that the ‘424 application is silent regarding selecting a second server based on a route, and is silent regarding a route being defined as a list of servers including the second server apparatus. Rather, paragraphs [0075] and [0076] of the ‘424 application merely state that the print processor 194 at the local location can contact the print processor 196 at the remote location. In particular, Applicants note that Claim 1, which is directed to a server apparatus, also recites a second server, a third server, and a print server. It is unclear to Applicants which elements in the ‘424 application read on the four servers recited in Claim 1. Further, there is no discussion in the ‘424 application regarding routing information being acquired based on a print location. Rather, the assumption in the ‘424 system appears to be that there is a local location, which knows about a remote location.

Further, the ‘424 application fails to disclose a transfer unit that transfers information of the print reservation, the acquired route information, and a document related to the print reservation to the second sharing unit of the second server apparatus for routing to the third server and then to a print server connected to a printer at the print location identified in the information of the print reservation, as recited in amended Claim 1.

In this regard, Applicants note that, in a non-limiting example, as shown in Figure 1, a print reservation entered by a user at a Web server 1 to a server A-1 can be routed to a second server B-2 via the server A-0 and the server B-0. Further, after routing to the server B-2, the reservation and the document are routed to the print server PS-3 and then to the printer P-3-1. Rather, the '424 application merely discloses sending information from a print processor at a local location to a print processor at a remote location, but is silent regarding transferring of route information, which includes a list of servers defining a route from a server apparatus to a third server at a print location, along with the print reservation and the document, to a second server for routing to a third server and then to a print server, as required by Claim 1.

Thus, for the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claim 1 is rendered moot by the present amendment to that claim.

Independent Claims 14 and 19 recite limitations analogous to the limitations recited in Claim 1 and have been amended in a manner analogous to the amendment to Claim 1. Accordingly, for the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of Claims 14 and 19 are rendered moot by the present amendment to those claims.

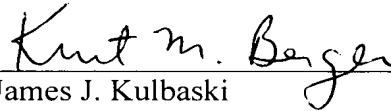
Regarding the rejection of dependent Claims 2-7, 13, 15-18, and 20-23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), Applicants respectfully submit that the '921, '096, and '829 patents fail to remedy the deficiencies of the '424 application, as discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of the above-noted dependent claims are rendered moot by the present amendment to Claims 1, 14, and 19.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 14, and 19 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over any proper combination of the '424 application and the '921, '096, and '829 patents.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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